



## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **Indiana Workforce Development Plan Gains Federal Approval**

INDIANAPOLIS (December 2, 2005) - Indiana's two-year strategic plan reshaping and streamlining the delivery of workforce services under the federal Workforce Investment Act has received approval from the United States Department of Labor.

In a letter to Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels, Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Emily Stover DeRocco stated: "We support Indiana's efforts to streamline its governance structure in order to improve efficiency and assure greater accountability."

"This is good news for Indiana and for our efforts to create a workforce development system that makes sense for Indiana, its employers, and its workers," said Governor Daniels.

Department of Workforce Development Commissioner Ron Stiver said "when fully implemented, this plan will streamline the delivery of services, create a regionally-focused system, and result in the shifting of at least \$1.5 million in administrative costs to direct training for Hoosiers."

DeRocco also said: "We agree that it should reduce administrative costs, provide for an increased focus on performance, and strengthen the commitment of the employer community to the workforce investment system."

Implementation of the strategic plan will enable Indiana to meet its objectives of increasing career opportunities for Hoosiers, growing the wealth of Hoosier citizens, and delivering premier customer service.

While the strategic plan, which goes in effect on July 1, 2006, has many facets, it stresses the three main tenets of increasing flexibility, accountability, and competition.

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Specifics include:

**Updated and Empowered Regional Workforce Areas** - A cornerstone of the plan better aligns Indiana's workforce development and economic development programs, creating 11 updated and coherent regional workforce areas. The new regions represent current economic, migration, growth and demographic patterns in Indiana, and replace regions established decades ago.

**New Regional Workforce Boards** - At the helm of each region's workforce development efforts will be smaller and higher-profile Regional Workforce Boards, composed of nine to sixteen members. Leaders of business, economic development, education, and labor are appointed by local elected officials. Under the old system, workforce investment boards ranged from 35 to 100 members with about twenty-five percent participation. The new Regional Workforce Boards will be able to hold members accountable for participation and leadership since an absence will be easily recognized.

**More Resources for Training, Less for Administration** - The new regional approach will shave an estimated \$1.5 to \$2 million in administrative costs, as fewer regions and smaller Regional Workforce Boards will reduce administrative overhead of the system. This money will be put to use training Hoosiers for better jobs.